



Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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Items of Interest:

- Naval Reserve Capt. Donald R. Ginzig has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). Ginzig is currently serving as Commanding Officer, Naval Reserve, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md.
- Navy Capt. Richard R. Jeffries has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). Jeffries is currently serving as commanding officer, Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton, Calif.
- Navy Capt. David J. Smith has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). Smith is currently serving as assistant deputy chief, Health Care Operations, M3HB, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Washington, D.C.

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Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Visits USNS Mercy

By Journalist 1st Class (SW) Joshua Smith, USNS Mercy Public Affairs

OFF THE COAST OF BANDA ACEH — Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr. visited the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) on station off the coast of Banda Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia, Feb. 19. Mercy, with its crew of Navy medical personnel, volunteer health care providers from the non-governmental organization (NGO) Project HOPE and uniformed members of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) are currently conducting humanitarian assistance operations in the tsunami-devastated region.

Winkenwerder flew to the ship via Navy helicopter where he was met by Capt. Mark Llewellyn, commanding officer of the ship's Medical Treatment Facility (MTF). Following lunch with the ship's senior medical personnel, Llewellyn gave Wikenwerder a tour of the MTF, where numerous patients from Banda Aceh are being treated.

"I think it's good that our senior leaders come here to see first hand

what we're doing for the people here on the ship and ashore," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Aura Nafus, of Mercy's patient administration department. "It was such a horrible disaster and they lost so much."

At the end of the tour, Winkenwerder met with Navy, NGO and USPHS medical personnel in Mercy's wardroom where they presented him with an in-depth brief of what Mercy has accomplished since arriving in the region Feb. 3. Following the brief, Winkenwerder spoke to the assembled Mercy crew on the ship's mess deck, congratulating them on their contributions.

"I want to say to you that as humanitarians, you are representing the United States, not just the government of the United States, but the people of the United States," said Winkenwerder. "I want to say thank you for all you're doing. You are doing great work. You are doing much needed work that is making a real difference."

Mercy is deployed to the region as part of Operation Unified Assistance, the multinational response to the tsunami disaster.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Dr. William Winkenwerder, visited with an Indonesian boy and his caregiver during a tour of the Intensive Care Unit aboard the USNS Mercy (T-AH 19).
Photo by Journalist 1st Class Joshua Smith.



Three Navy Medicine Heroes

John. M. Williams Capt. MC, USN



Capt. John M. Williams, MC, USN received the Bronze Star medal at a ceremony held at Camp Pendleton, Calif. As the medical officer for the 3rd. Civil Affairs Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force in Iraq he was called upon to treat battle wounded Marines, both in a field clinic and on-scene. His performance following an attack on a convoy, ensured the survival, medical evacuation and treatment of several wounded Marines. As the public health officer, he provided expert advice and coordination for hundreds of projects in Iraq, and garnered \$3 million of donated medical supplies for the Iraq Ministry of Health in Al Anbar, Iraq. The image of the United States Forces was enhanced in the eyes of all Iraqi's due to his selfless actions. His total effectiveness, forceful leadership, and loyal devotion to duty reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

Andrew R. Slaughter Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class

U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Andrew R. Slaughter receives the Bronze Star medal with "V" for valor and a Purple Heart medal at a ceremony held at Camp Pendleton, Calif. Three times Slaughter was involved in action, pulling a mortally wounded soldier from a burning vehicle, ducking enemy fire to reach wounded Marines and, at one point, using a small folding knife to do a hasty life-saving tracheotomy on another wounded soldier. He was also awarded the Purple Heart medal for wounds received when he took shrapnel in his leg after several enemy rockets hit his base. Slaughter, is the sole corpsman assigned to the 29-member platoon that served security and operations for the 1st Marine Division's jump command post.



Matthew Parzych Hospitalman



U.S. Hospitalman Matthew Parzych received the Purple Heart medal at a ceremony held at Naval Hospital Bremerton, Bremerton, Wash. Ten miles west of the Abu Ghraib prison, Parzych, and three Marines were standing near the Humvee they had been in just moments before when a car ran into the side of the Humvee, detonating an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). Parzych was the only one who survived the explosion; he was thrown backwards by the blast, knocked unconscious and woke up to a fractured tibia and two holes in his right calf.

Another corpsman from Naval Hospital Bremerton, was nearby and on the scene shortly after the explosion. "Some of the shrapnel from the blast hit the back of the AAV I was in," said Hospital Corpsman Jarrod Corley. "I immediately got ready to react to any casualties, but I was surprised to see such a close friend wounded."

"I want to go back," said Parzych. "But since I'm not fit for full duty yet, they won't let me."

Navy Hospital's HIV/AIDS Experts Host Russian Group

By Ellen Maurer, National Naval Medical Center Public Affairs

BETHESDA, Md. — National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) hosted a group of 10 Russian health care providers Feb. 1, who visited the hospital and the Infectious Disease Department to discuss U.S. military program for HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention.

"We came here to find out more about how the United States works together with its government and non-government organizations to help educate the public about HIV and AIDS," said Tatyana Nikolayevna, a chief physician at a Russian medical center for HIV diagnostic treatment. "We are getting better in this area, but we still need to do more to help stop the spread of this disease."

Navy Medicine has had great success with appropriate HIV

antibody testing, confidential notification of test results and continued medical evaluation, all of which are strong efforts to minimize the spread of HIV in active-duty service members and their families.

"I think the visit was a great success in that the group benefited from not only talking to our Navy providers, but also our patients," said Capt. Sybil Tasker, chief of the Infectious Disease Department at NNMC. "Meeting active-duty individuals who are living with HIV infection helped them better understand the benefits of multidisciplinary HIV care with an emphasis on education and peer support."

A report underwritten by the U.S. Agency for International Development, comparing Russian and international statistics, found the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Russia differs significantly from the disease

in North America and Western Europe in terms of age. According to the report, about 70 percent of the HIV-positive western population are more than 30 years old, versus in Russia where more than 80 percent are under the age of 30.

The visit was coordinated through the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program, a forum designed to partner world leaders with their American counterparts, according to Terry Davidson, foreign visitor liaison officer for the U.S. Department of State. Both NNMC and Walter Reed Army Medical Center were chosen as sites to visit because of their status as leading medical institutions for both health care and research and development.

Globally, the World Health Organization estimates between 35 and 42 million people are living with HIV/AIDS.

EMF Portsmouth Bravo Det Returns Home

By Journalist 1st Class Elizabeth St. John, Naval Medical Center FSD Norfolk Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. — Nearly 200 members of Naval Expeditionary Medical Facility (EMF) Portsmouth Bravo Det. Returned to Norfolk Naval Station Feb 13 after a six-month deployment to Kuwait.

EMF Portsmouth staffed the U.S. Military Hospital in Kuwait, having relieved the Army's 801st Combat Support Hospital.

"I think the number one thing we're known for is taking care of patients," said Capt. Martin Snyder, EMF Portsmouth Commanding Officer. "The patients were glad to see the Navy come in. We're known for being patient friendly."

The group of doctors, nurses and support personnel provided a full range of medical services while in Kuwait.

Their goal was to provide full medical care for all coalition forces in the Kuwaiti area of responsibility.

"The U.S. Military Hospital

Kuwait, staffed by EMF Portsmouth, had a reputation on both sides of the border of delivering truly quality tertiary care in a patient-centered environment," remarked Snyder.

While in Kuwait, EMF Portsmouth started an elective surgery program and performed cardiac stress tests, both helped to reduce the amount of time service members spent away from their units.

"I'm very proud of what everybody did. It's very heartwarming for a commanding officer to see all these medical professionals, especially the corpsmen, get together as a team," Snyder said. "We definitely became a family out there. Everybody looked after everybody else, everybody took care of everybody else, and, at the drop of a hat, thought nothing of going the extra mile to take care of those patients. They truly did the Navy proud."

Reservists assigned to Fleet Hospital Dallas relieved EMF Portsmouth earlier in February.

USNS Mercy Launches Uniting Through Reading Program

By Journalist 3rd Class Needleman, USNS Mercy Public Affairs

ABOARD USNS MERCY —

While deployed in support of Operation Unified Assistance, the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) became the first Military Sealift Command vessel to offer the Family Literacy Foundation's Uniting Through Reading program to its crew, Feb. 22.

"It's a good morale builder, because it's a way I can communicate to my family even though I'm so far away," said Personnelman 2nd Class Kennedy James.

Uniting Through Reading is an underway quality of life program for military families. The program helps keep parents and children connected while separated during long deployments, through the medium of reading aloud on videotape.

Once the Sailor reads in front of the camera, the videotape or DVD is mailed to the Sailor's family.

Marine Receives Treatment in a Hyperbaric Recompression Chamber

By Sgt. Ryan S. Scranton, 2nd Marine Division Combat Correspondent

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — The 26 year-old sergeant's gloves cover his burned hands as he removes his shoe and a brace on his right foot. The brace supports the metal plate holding his fused bones together. He crawls into a long metal capsule like an astronaut before putting on a mask to supply pure oxygen to his lungs. This procedure has become part of Sgt. Charles J. Rhinehart's daily routine after an improvised explosive device struck his light armored vehicle during convoy operations near the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, July 2004.

Rhinehart suffered burns on more than 30 percent of his body and received shrapnel in his arm, shoulders, back, many of his inter-

nal organs and his right foot. The light armored vehicle crewman lost a kidney and nearly his big toe in the explosion. Rhinehart was taken to the prison's medical facility by fellow Marines in 2d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion before being evacuated to Baghdad and then to Germany. He was then transferred to Brooke Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

"I remember waking up in the ICU at the BAMC in Texas trying to figure out where I was," said Rhinehart.

Waking up in a hospital bed at BAMC he saw his three-month-old son for the first time.

After several weeks in BAMC, Rhinehart was transferred to the Naval Hospital at Camp Lejeune for further treatment. He received surgery on his foot, fusing his bones together with a metal plate. The explosion left significant burns and scarring that the surgery was unable to repair, leaving little viable tissue left to heal.

"After the surgery, I started to lose the blood circulation toward the plate in my foot," said Rhinehart. "The skin around the plate died because it didn't have a good blood supply."

Rhinehart's doctors needed to find a way to increase his blood flow and chances of recovery. The medical staff at the Naval Hospital enlisted the help of a small dive team from 2d Reconnaissance Battalion. Rhinehart's doctors decided to use the divers' hyperbaric recompression chamber system.

The chamber is commonly used by the battalion's dive technicians to treat divers with disorders such as decompression sickness. In Rhinehart's case, it is used for hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

The pressurized environment allows 200-300 percent more oxygen into Rhinehart's lungs, according to Capt. James M. Chimiak, who heads the anesthesia department at the Naval Hospital.

The increased oxygen levels are essential for the blood vessels in his foot to grow into the wound, said Chimiak. The vessels form a base allowing the skin to grow over the wound boosting his chances of a full recovery. The oxygen therapy also helps stave off infection and reduce the wound's swelling, said Chimiak.

Rhinehart recently received his eighth treatment and has seen significant improvements to his wound. Rhinehart could receive as many as 60 treatments, but Chimiak said he expects the sergeant will only need 20.

"He started with a three centimeter wound and it is now only two and a half centimeters," said Chimiak. "If this graphing of the surrounding tissue was not possible he could have lost his foot."

Rhinehart is one of the first Marines to use the hyperbaric oxygen therapy. If not for the HBC therapy, Rhinehart could expect a prolonged healing process over several months with only a 50 percent change of full recovery, said Chimiak.

Based on Rhinehart's success, Chimiak said he hopes to see the therapy incorporated into the treatment of returning Marines and Sailors whose combat wounds are difficult to heal. "I hope to see this option incorporated into a well designed wound care program" said Chimiak. "This treatment is not for everybody, but could be useful for certain patients with non-healing wounds."

Rhinehart said the therapy has also helped to heal his other wounds.

"Before the chamber, my skin graphs were really red, puffed-up and itchy," he said. "Now they have evened out and are healing really well."

Rhinehart's recovery is still in progress and he hopes the therapy will allow him to return to full duty.

"I plan to stay in the Marine Corps and retire after 20 years," he said.



Sergeant Charles J. Rhinehart takes off his foot brace before entering a hyperbaric recompression chamber system at 2d Reconnaissance Battalion, Feb. 10. Rhinehart is undergoing special therapy using the chamber to heal wounds he received from an improvised explosive device he encountered last summer in Iraq. Photo by Sgt. Stephen D'Allesio.

Naval Hospital Lemoore Received OB Customer Satisfaction Award

By Capt. Colin Chinn, MC, USN,
Naval Hospital Lemoore

LEMOORE, Ca.— Naval Hospital Lemoore received the 2004 MHS TRICARE Satisfaction Award for Obstetrical Care at the TRICARE Conference in Washington, D.C., January 24.

"This award truly recognizes the command's commitment to individualized, family and patient-centered care and speaks to the team approach embraced by all departments in the hospital from initial examination, pre-natal care, delivery and post-natal care of the mother and new infant," said Capt. DeGroot, the hospital's



Naval Hospital Lemoore received the OB Customer Satisfaction Award during the Tricare Conference in Washington, D.C. From L to R : Lt. Gen. Taylor, MC, USAF, Air Force Surgeon General; Vice Adm. Authur, MC, USN, U.S. Navy Surgeon General ; Dr. Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), and Capt. DeGroot, NC, USN, commanding officer of Naval Hospital Lemoore. *Photo provided by TMA.*

commanding officer.

"The most important aspect of this award is that it comes from our patients," she added.

This is the second year an award was presented to the military treatment facility that scored the highest for satisfaction with obstetrical care gathered from responses to the monthly DoD customer satisfaction surveys received from October 2003 to August 2004.

During the conference DeGroot accepted the award from Dr. William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and Vice Adm. Donald Arthur, Navy Surgeon General.

NH Pensacola and Branch Health Clinics Earn 4th Consecutive "Gold Star" in Health Promotion

By Rod Duren, Naval Hospital Pensacola Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla.— Naval Hospital Pensacola and its 12 Naval Branch Health Clinics earned their fourth consecutive "Gold Star" award from the Naval Environ-

mental Health Center for Navy and Marine Corps command excellence in health promotion.

The Gold Star Award recognizes the highest level of achievement and the facilities' commitment to military families in Northwest Florida, Mississippi, south Louisiana and western Tennessee.

"We're committed to healthy lifestyles through support and development of health programs and partnerships with other agencies within our community," said Jim Sherrard, the hospital's Health Promotion Director.

NH Pensacola's Health Promotion Department strives to provide an optimum state of readiness and to enhance health and productivity among active duty, staff and beneficiaries.

The variety of health promotion programs offered by NH Pensacola include nutrition and weight man-

agement; physical activity and injury prevention; stress management; suicide prevention; sexual health and responsibility; smoking cessation, and hypertension prevention.

These programs along with the number of satisfied beneficiaries who utilize these services are the reason NH Pensacola and the Branch Health Clinics receive the Gold Star, according to Sherrard.

Established in 1995 by NEHC, the award recognizes Navy medical commands that have implemented successful population-based health promotion programs.

Twenty eight Navy commands were awarded the 2004 Command Excellence in Health Promotion Award. There are three levels to the awards: Gold (highest), Silver and Bronze. There were 17 Gold Star recipients, nine Silver Eagles and two Bronze Anchors.



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